REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner noted that claims 1-29 were pending in the application and rejected claims 1-29 under 35 USC § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patents 6,404,743 to Meandzija and 5,987,514 to Rangarajan (References A and B, respectively). Claims 1-29 remain in the case. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below.

Rejection and Response to Applicants' Arguments

The rejection set forth in the May 18, 2004 Office Action relies on the same references and uses much of the same language as in the September 11, 2003 Office Action. The primary differences are that a different "manager" was identified as corresponding to the "manager" recited in the sending operation of claim 1 than was identified as the "manager" recited in the transmitting operation of claim 1. The latter "manager" is still identified as "SNMP management station 110" (Office Action, page 2, line 18), while the former "manager" is identified as corresponding to "management application 220...[and] an events processing module 224" (Office Action, page 2, lines 21-22). Also, on the last three lines of page 4 at the end of item 5 the citation to Meandzija was expanded to include lines 47-55 which was asserted as disclosing forwarding "an event report signifying the occurrence of the event to the network manager".

Most significantly, item 4 on pages 3-4 of the May 18, 2004 Office Action replaced the third paragraph on page 3 of the September 11, 2003 Office Action. In item 4 it was asserted that Rangarajan discloses the operations recited in claim 1. Given these assertions, it is unclear why the claims were not rejected as anticipated by Rangarajan.

In addition to the changes to the rejection of the claims, item 23 on page 10 of the Office Action provided a Response to Arguments in the Amendment filed March 11, 2004. This response asserted that column 8, lines 10-25 of Rangarajan teaches that "an event request can contain a list of attributes records having threshold conditions" (Office Action, page 10, lines 7-8) and therefore, column 6, lines 30-43 of Rangarajan allegedly "teaches issuing an event request to receive changes ... in the state information" (Office Action, page 10, lines 9-11).

Distinctions over the Prior Art

When a connection between a manager and an agent is broken and restored and the manager must be quickly informed of the current state of the agent, the manager sends a request to the agent asking for its current state information. The state information of the agent may include a multitude of different state attributes. Previously in such situations the agent

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would transmit information regarding each of the state attributes. As described on page 3, lines 17-34 of the application, according to the invention the agent compares the current state information with a normal state and only sends the state information which deviates from the normal state. Nothing has been cited or found in Meandzija or Rangarajan to suggest responding to a request in this way.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite sending "in response to the request message, only selected state information indicating the deviations from the normal state" (e.g., claim 1, last 2 lines) and claim 17 has been amended to recite a similar limitation. In contrast, Rangarajan discloses a manager that sends event requests containing the information in the table at column 7, lines 1-14, to a mid-level manager to poll a device (agent) during a prescribed interval to ascertain an attribute of the device against one or more conditions. The mid-level manager generates an event report which is forwarded to the manager when the condition occurs (see column 3, lines 32-37). Thus, when a manager needs to know one or more attributes of a device the manager addresses a mid-level manager which in turn polls the device during a pre-determined period of time. After the device responds to the polling by the mid-level manager, the mid-level manager compares the attributes of the device with the condition. The device (agent) does not do any comparing or checking, as recited in the independent claims. Therefore, the system taught Rangarajan is unable to provide the benefit of reducing the amount of data transmitted when an agent is restored, because the agent is not expected to have the intelligence to perform operations that are performed by the mid-level manager instead.

On the other hand, as described in the March 11, 2004 Amendment, Meandzija discloses a management station that sends event information to an agent, where the event information defines some pre-conditions for generating an event. The agent monitors data and when the pre-conditions have been met, the agent generates the event and communicates a notification regarding the event to the management station (see column 4, lines 55-64). There are three types of notifications which an agent can send to a management station: an alarm notification, a state change notification and a value change notification (see column 13, lines 55-58).

In the case of a state change notification, Meandzija teaches that the agent is to generate an event when a state has changed (see column 14, lines 3-7). This requires the agent to monitor a certain state and once a change is detected in the state, a notification is sent to the management station. However, in the amended claims the agent sends message(s) "in response to the request message" (e.g., claim 17, last line) from the manager, not in response to detection of a state change. Furthermore, the message contains "only selected state

information indicating the deviations from the normal state" (e.g., claim 1, last two lines) which is obtained by "checking ... state information with regard to deviations from a normal state" (e.g., claim 1, lines 8-9), not by detecting when a state change occurs which could be from one normal state to another normal state, or from an abnormal state to a normal state.

The difference between the teachings of Meandzija and the present invention is reflected by the statement that the state information is transmitted "for a state realignment" (claim 1, line 4). If Meandzija's method of responding to requests from a manager were applied to state realignment, the manager would have to wait until a condition occurs before receiving a response from an agent. Thus, the method of the present invention provides the benefit of quicker as well as shorter responses to realign states.

In addition to responding to requests, Meandzija discloses providing unsolicited information at column 10, lines 5-8. Since such information is not provided in response to a request from a manager as recited in the claims, providing such information does not anticipate or suggest the present invention. Furthermore, this method of communication would not apply to realignment situation, since in this situation the agent is not responding to a request from a manager so that realignment can occur.

For the above reasons, it is submitted that claims 1 and 17 and claims 2-16 and 18-29 which depend therefrom patentably distinguish over Meandzija in view of Rangarajan.

Summary

It is submitted that the references cited by the Examiner, taken individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest the features of the present claimed invention. Thus, it is submitted that claims 1-29 are in a condition suitable for allowance. Entry of this Amendment, reconsideration of the claims and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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